CHAPTER 8

ORGANIZATION AND OCCUPATION OF THE TRUCK COMPANY AREA OF OPERATIONS

A truck company does not normally occupy a field site for extended periods of time. Units move to maintain support, in response to a change of mission, and to enhance survivability. When a unit relocates, procedures are divided into three phases: reconnaissance and selection of positions; moving the company; and occupying, organizing, and improving the position. This chapter explains the basic steps for moving a truck company to a new location. These actions may be modified to fit a specific tactical situation.

8-1. METHODS OF SELECTION AND PREPARATION. It is critical that units keep movement time to a minimum. Tactical movement SOPs are essential to unit tactical preparations and procedures and should be written for both day and night occupation. Either the two-party or RSOP method may be used to select and prepare unit operations areas.

a. **Two-party Method**. The two-party method involves two distinct parties, the reconnaissance party and the advance party. This method is normally used when the commander has advance warning of movement.

b. **Reconnaissance, Selection, Occupation Party Method**. This method combines the functions of the reconnaissance and advance parties. It is generally used when the commander has little advance warning or when the company is moving as part of a larger unit. The RSOP may also be used when the commander has limited personnel, equipment, or time available.

8-2. BASIC AREA REQUIREMENTS. All motor transport units need large field sites. Guidance to all levels of command are given by the planner, who develops requirements for establishing a base to the motor transport unit commander who selects a suitable field site for his unit. In actual operations, factors to consider also include:

- Terrain.
- Weather.
- Operational requirements.
- Existing facilities.
- Local directives.

Site selection is governed by:

- *Mission*. Mission is paramount. A particular site may be excellent for several reasons, but it is acceptable only if it permits mission accomplishment.
- *Enemy threat*. Site size is of limited usefulness if it does not allow for enough dispersal for survivability and effective operations based on the threat.

Where applicable, mission and enemy threat take precedence over the figures and considerations in this chapter.

8-3. TYPES OF OPERATING BASE AREAS. From an operational viewpoint, and considering the requirements for dispersion of vehicles and facilities as dictated by the tactical situation, the operating base area requirements for motor transport units are classified as follows:

- *Minimum*. The formal type of field setup under administrative conditions (possibility of hostile action remote). Vehicles are parked in the unit motor park. Tentage, troops, and administrative, are in designated areas. Only a minimum distance is maintained between vehicles and unit facilities.
- *Average*. A field setup under tactical conditions where friendly forces have air superiority (possibility of hostile air attack remote). An approximate 50-foot (15-meter) dispersion between unit vehicles and facilities is maintained to protect against losses from hostile ground action including mortar or artillery fire.
- *Maximum*. A field setup that considers a dispersion of about 150 feet (46 meters) between unit vehicles and unit facilities as protection against hostile air attack or indirect fire.

Figure 8-1 shows the layout of a typical operations area.

8-4. RECONNAISSANCE AND SELECTION OF POSITIONS. When a transportation unit receives an MWO, the unit commander initiates actions to prepare his unit for movement. The process described here remains essentially the same for both selection and preparation. The sequence is as follows:

- Commander/CP receives the MWO.
- Limited map reconnaissance conducted to determine limited time-distance factors.
- Pertinent tactical information gathered.
- Warning order issued to the reconnaissance party OIC or RSOP OIC and key leaders.
- RSOP OIC performs detailed map reconnaissance.
- Strip maps of primary and alternate routes drawn and distributed (if not given in the MWO); includes the harbor/hide area. Copies provided to the CP/company commander and each driver in the reconnaissance/RSOP party.
- Operations order issued. (NOTE: Use of sand tables and rock drills is recommended during the OPORD. The general rule of one-third/two-thirds should be used in the development of the OPORD.)
- Route and site reconnaissance conducted.
- FRAGO issued (if necessary, based on reconnaissance/RSOP findings).
- Position selected.
- Occupation planned and position prepared for occupation.
- Position occupied, organized, and improved.

8-5. TWO-PARTY METHOD. The two-party method employs a reconnaissance party to aid in site selection and an advance party to occupy and prepare the AO. The function of the reconnaissance party ends once the commander has selected an acceptable location. The job of the advance party begins with its arrival at the site and ends with the arrival of the last vehicle.

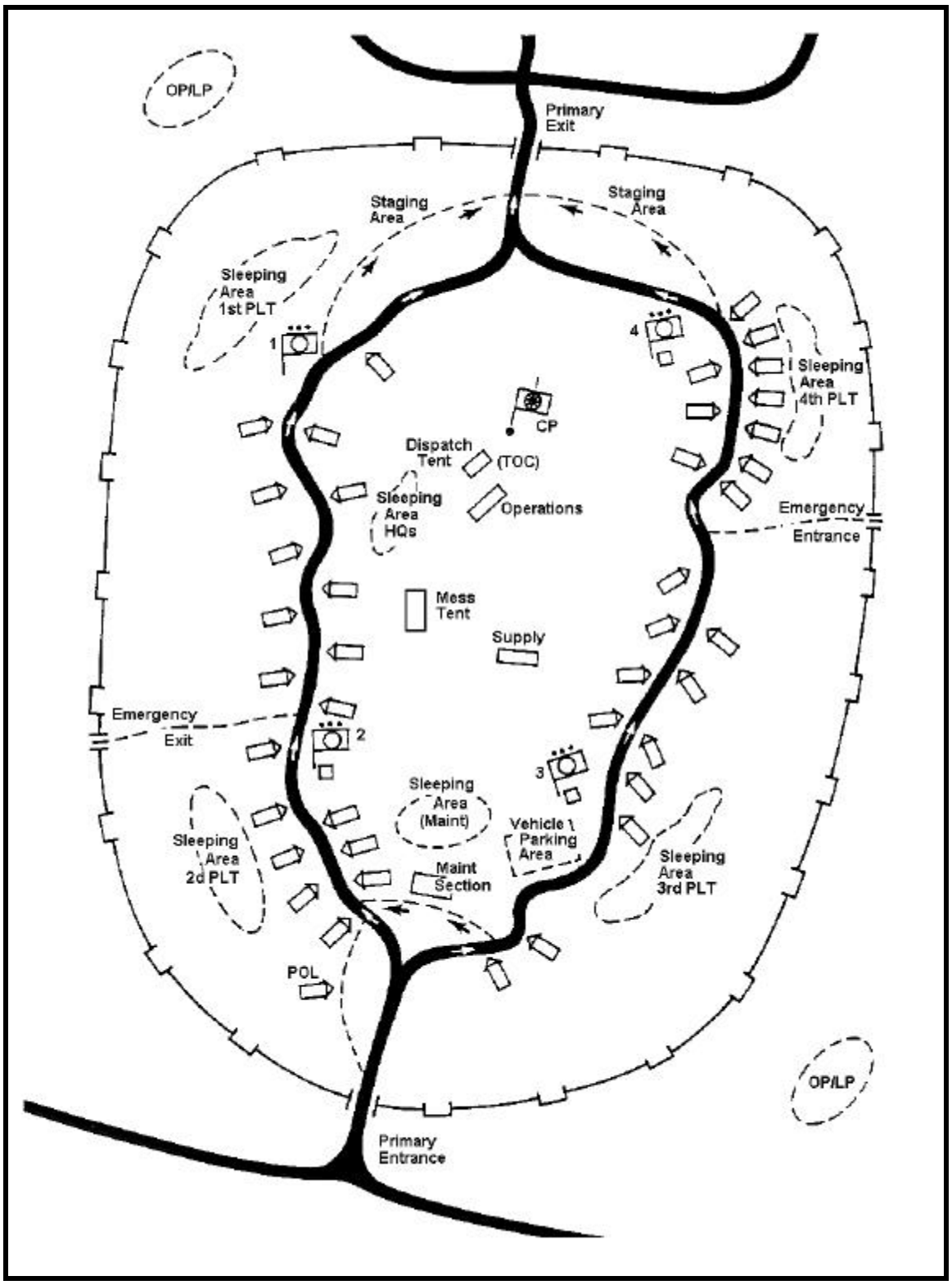

Figure 8-1. A typical operations area

a. **Reconnaissance Party**. At a minimum, the unit commander will make a map reconnaissance before occupying an unfamiliar area. After this, he sends out a leader's reconnaissance party to select the best location. The primary purpose of reconnaissance and selection of routes and sites is to facilitate orderly, rapid, and safe movement to, and emplacement at, the designated position.

b. **Composition and Size of the Reconnaissance Party**. The composition of the reconnaissance party is governed by METT-T. The company commander will decide the size or deviate if the size is per unit SOP. The reconnaissance party usually consists of a lieutenant (if available), assistant truckmaster, and a security team. The reconnaissance party determines the acceptability of proposed sites and makes recommendations to the commander. Site acceptability is based on--

- *Defendability*. Is the site defendable?
- *Size*. Is the site large enough to accommodate unit vehicles and equipment?
- *Roads*. Is there a suitable internal road network?

To be entirely suitable the site should also have the following:

- A firm, well-drained surface for maintaining and dispersing vehicles.
- A minimum of one entrance and exit.
- Natural cover and concealment.

NOTE: The RSOP OIC must ensure that the composition and drainage of the ground surface will support unit equipment. He must consider the effect of weather on the surface firmness for the site and its access routes.

Based upon reconnaissance party findings, the unit commander selects the most favorable site. The next step is to prepare the area for occupation.

c. **Composition and Size of the Advance Party**. The company commander organizes an advance party to occupy and prepare the site. The advance party typically consists of the first sergeant, assistant truckmaster, platoon representatives, NBC NCO, mess personnel, a senior wheeled vehicle repairman, a wireman, and added troops for labor and security. Troops assigned to the advance party are split up and assigned specific tasks. The makeup and size of the advance party is governed by the--

- Tactical situation.
- Amount of work required to prepare the site for occupation.

d. **Advance Party Activities**. The first task of the advance party is to clear and secure the site. Troops divide into fire teams. They search the area for mines, booby traps, intelligence information, and other signs of enemy activity. Once the teams have cleared the area, a light security screen is set up around the site. Observation posts and strong points along likely avenues of approach are established to ensure early warning and limited protection.

Tentative locations of the company and platoon command posts are identified and provision made for wire communications. Platoon and maintenance section areas are selected and marked. Roads

and trails that allow for two-way traffic are selected. Alternate exits are selected and marked to allow emergency departure if the main exit becomes blocked. Individual parking areas are selected, keeping in mind the heaviest, most awkward vehicles such as tractors and trailers. Platoon representatives thoroughly reconnoiter their assigned area.

As the main body of the company arrives, vehicles rapidly clear the approach route and are guided into the site and parked. Drivers quickly tone down their vehicles by covering reflective surfaces. They then take up a hasty position on the perimeter and wait to be assigned a fighting position.

8-6. RECONNAISSANCE, SELECTION, OCCUPATION PARTY METHOD. The RSOP performs all functions required to successfully occupy a site. It is directed by an OIC and/or NCOIC, and its mission is accomplished by teams that carry out specialized activities.

a. **Reconnaissance and Selection of Routes and Sites**. The primary purpose of reconnaissance and selection of routes and sites is to facilitate orderly, rapid, and safe movement to, and emplacement at, the designated position. The RSOP performs its function by reconnoitering and selecting primary and alternate access routes (if not already dictated) and sites for unit equipment and facilities within the position.

b. **Organization and Equipment**. The unit SOP generally establishes RSOP organization and equipment. Changes are made by the company commander as needed and IAW the tactical situation.

c. **Officer in Charge**. The OIC has overall responsibility for the RSOP. He ensures that the party is properly briefed. He verifies the acceptability of the new position and is responsible for its detailed layout. The OIC is normally a commissioned officer but may be a senior NCO.

d. **Noncommissioned Officer in Charge**. The NCOIC assists the OIC. He ensures that the new position is properly cleared of mines and secured prior to entry by the main RSOP element. The NCOIC ensures that RSOP members have local security, that they conduct a chemical and radiological survey, and that the parent unit is notified as to the acceptability of the new site.

e. **Teams**. The size of the RSOP is METT-T dependent. The tactical situation determines the number and types of teams necessary to clear and secure an area. Individuals may be on more than one team, and some teams may have concurrent activity. Teams should be proficient in operating the equipment necessary to perform their function. At a minimum, the following teams should be established:

- *Security team*. Until the area has been cleared and a light security screen established, everyone is a member of this team. The light security screen may be in the form of strong points placed in the four cardinal directions or along likely avenues of approach, with one acting as the dismount point. If needed, roving patrols may augment the light security screen and act as a quick reactionary force.
- *NBC team*. If the tactical situation warrants, this team emplaces the M8 chemical alarms and conducts M256 kit readings. If the situation does not warrant, these personnel assist other teams in preparing the site.
- *Minesweeping team*. If the tactical situation warrants, this team operates the mine detector as part of the initial clearing of the area or when areas within the tentative perimeter are

suspected of being mined. If the situation does not warrant, these personnel assist other teams in preparing the site.

- *Ground guides*. This team assists in a smooth initial occupation. One ground guide per subelement is designated to meet that element at the dismount point upon arrival. Prior to the arrival of the main body, these personnel assist the OIC and other teams with the layout of the site.

f. **Equipment**. The RSOP must have equipment sufficient to successfully accomplish the reconnaissance, layout, and security of the new position. The RSOP normally requires the following:

- Truck, cargo, 2 1/2- or 5-ton, 6 x 6.
- Truck, utility with radio set, AN/VRC-46.
- Detecting set, mine, portable, metallic and nonmetallic.
- Alarm, chemical agent, automatic, portable, M8.
- Radiacmeter, IN-174/PD.
- Telephone set, TA-312/PT or cable, telephone, WD-1.
- Marking stakes.
- Maps of area of operations.
- Binoculars and night vision goggles, PVS-7.
- Camouflage screen system.
- Machine gun, 7.62-millimeter with tripod.
- Sufficient water, rations, and POL for 24 hours.

g. **Reconnaissance**. The RSOP OIC conducts at least three types of reconnaissance per mission: map, route, and site.

(1) ***Map reconnaissance***. The OIC conducts a map reconnaissance upon receipt of the MWO. At a minimum, the OIC looks for the following:

- Primary route (if not dictated from higher).
- Alternate route.
- New location.
- Overhead clearances.
- Bridge classification.
- Route trafficability.
- Roadway width.
- Harbor/hide areas along the primary and secondary routes.
- Proximity to built-up areas.

(2) ***Route reconnaissance***. The route reconnaissance is conducted en route to the new position. Based on the above considerations, the OIC determines if the route is acceptable. The RSOP also ensures that the designated harbor/hide area is adequate. A harbor/hide area is off the MSR, large enough for the entire main body, has adequate cover and concealment, and is defendable for short periods. It is about halfway between the old and new sites, terrain permitting.

All RSOP personnel dismount upon reaching the access road that leads to the new position. All vehicles then disperse, herringbone style. The OIC notifies the unit of arrival. At least two soldiers

stay to secure the vehicles and monitor the radio. The OIC or NCOIC gives them a five-point contingency plan that includes the following information:

- Who is going with the OIC/NCOIC.
- How long the OIC/NCOIC element will be gone.
- What to do if the OIC/NCOIC element does not return.
- What to do if another element becomes engaged.
- What to do if they become engaged.

If the tactical situation warrants, two security team members use the mine detector to clear the access road, and two personnel conduct a radiological and chemical survey. The entire team then moves tactically to the new site looking for signs of enemy activity. Upon reaching the new site, the RSOP OIC/NCOIC places a two-man team at what they believe to be the 6 o'clock position; this becomes the dismount point. The technique used by the RSOP to clear the area must be tactically sound. Upon reaching what the OIC/NCOIC believes to be the farthest position, another two-man team is left to act as a LP/OP or strong point. This team should also have a five-point contingency plan. Personnel permitting, the OIC/NCOIC may elect to leave more two-man teams along likely avenues of approach. They may also augment the LP/OP or strong points with roving patrols while laying out the site and waiting for the main body. RSOP vehicles do not enter the area until it has been secured. The position is secured as covertly as possible.

If the RSOP encounters enemy forces en route to or at the new location, it does not become decisively engaged but immediately breaks contact. When contact is broken, the OIC advises the commander of the situation. The commander then issues a FRAGO directing movement to the alternate position (if one is given) or to the harbor/hide area. If chemical or radiological contamination is present, the RSOP must move to the harbor/hide area, notify the commander, and request decontamination, if necessary.

(3) ***Site reconnaissance***. The third type of reconnaissance is the site reconnaissance. It is conducted IAW arrival at and clearance of the site. Site reconnaissance determines if the site will be selected. The OIC considers many requirements and factors in determining the acceptability of the tentative position. Once the OIC determines that the position is suitable, he informs the parent unit over FM radio. If the site is unacceptable, the OIC reconnoiters alternate locations. He may have authority to reconnoiter positions within a given distance to find a suitable location. The OIC uses the following criteria to determine site acceptability:

- Is it defendable?
- Is it large enough to accommodate unit vehicles and equipment?
- Is the internal road network sufficient?
- Does it have a firm, well-drained surface for maintenance and dispersion of vehicles?
- Does it have a minimum of one entrance and exit?
- Does it have natural cover and concealment?

NOTE: The RSOP OIC must ensure that the composition and drainage of the ground surface will support unit equipment. He must consider the effect of weather on the surface firmness for the site and its access routes.

h. **Laying Out the Position**. The RSOP OIC lays out the position. Selected positions are the best available for fields of fire, communications, accessibility, and survivability. Specific considerations for position layout include: command post, maintenance area, fuel tanker/tank and pump unit, troop area, mess facilities, latrines, and ammunition storage.

(1) ***Command post***. The CP is centrally located within the perimeter where it can exercise control over the company, remain well defended, and have lines of communication with subelements.

(2) ***Maintenance area***. The selection of the maintenance location depends on its accessibility to entry and exit routes. The area is located within the perimeter near the entrance. The maintenance area should have an entrance and exit within the perimeter.

(3) ***Fuel tanker/tank and pump unit***. The fuel tanker/TPU is located as near as possible to the primary entrance, inside the perimeter, so returning vehicles can be topped off.

(4) ***Troop area***. Personnel are permitted to sleep only in designated areas. Vehicles are not permitted to move without ground guides in areas where troops are sleeping.

(5) ***Mess facilities***. Special attention is given to the selection of the mess area. It should be centrally located within the perimeter, away from interior roads to avoid contamination of the food by dust. The mess area should be at least 100 yards (90 meters) from the latrines. The serving line, or lines, are marked with engineer tape and located to take advantage of available cover and concealment. Serving lines are planned so that a 5-yard (4.5-meter) interval is maintained between personnel under tactical conditions.

(6) ***Latrines***. Latrines are located on the downwind side of the operations area at least 100 yards (90 meters) from the water supply. Latrines should be able to accommodate at least 8 percent of the unit at a time. Hand-washing facilities should be located near the exits.

(7) ***Ammunition storage***. The basic load of ammunition is removed from transporting vehicles as soon as possible. It must be protected by sandbags or earth revetments and located near the supply tent.

i. **Plan the Occupation and Prepare Positions for Occupation**. After the RSOP OIC determines the layout of the new site, he ensures that all ground guides know exactly where they are to go and where equipment is to be placed. Preparations also include marking the location of major subelements of the unit. Everyone in the RSOP is updated on the challenge and password, changes to the original order or deviations to the SOP, and approximate arrival time of the main body and order of march.

j. **Occupy, Organize, and Improve Positions**. The unit is extremely vulnerable during the initial occupation. When the main body arrives at the new field location, a ground guide meets each major subelement and leads it to its location. All vehicles are moved off the MSR and access road into the position area as quickly as possible; maintaining intervals if possible.

Once the main body arrives, the unit focuses all its efforts on rapidly establishing a defensive perimeter, maintaining communications to higher headquarters while establishing internal communications, and reestablishing operations. Work priorities are established and unit personnel are given specific tasks.

8-7. MOVING THE COMPANY. A unit begins preparations to clear an area as soon as it receives the MWO. The sequence used to clear may vary based on the situation. However, the initial focus is on nonmission-essential equipment. Perimeter security must not be compromised in the preparation for movement.

a. **Vehicles on Dispatch**. The unit develops a plan and procedures to contact the driver on dispatch to regain positive control of the drivers as quickly as possible. Unless the unit is released from its mission during movement, the unit is prepared to continue support.

b. **Loading**. All nonmission-essential equipment, to include individual clothing and equipment, is loaded first. Vehicles are loaded so as to prepare for unloading at the new site. In other words, equipment needed first at the new site is either loaded last or is readily accessible. All loads are secured to prevent damage en route.

c. **Maintenance Section**. All nonoperational vehicles are planned for in the unit movement plan. Evacuation of nonoperational vehicles is accomplished as soon as the situation permits; if possible, prior to moving the main body.

d. **March Order**. When the unit's reconnaissance party or RSOP radios that the tentative site is acceptable, units with various types of vehicles determine the order of march. This prevents congestion on arrival at the new site.

e. **Final Inspection**. Once the main body is ready to depart, a police call of the entire area is conducted. This inspection ensures that no equipment has been overlooked. FM 21-10 contains detailed instructions on how to make and close garbage sumps and latrines.

8-8. OPERATING IN AN URBAN ENVIRONMENT. Truck companies may be required to operate from urban areas. The basic principles of occupying an area remain, but with significant differences. These differences include: camouflaging vehicles and equipment, establishing a defensive perimeter, and controlling civilians.

a. **Unit Operations Areas**. Unit operations areas in urban terrain function much as they do in rural terrain. In both cases, the operations area must contain a minimum of two entrance/exit routes, sufficient parking areas for tactical dispersion, camouflage of vehicles and equipment, and a maintenance area. Normal unit security measures must be modified for the urban operations environment. Factors include the nature of the terrain and the possible presence of civilians.

b. **Terrain Types**. Urban terrain types are categorized roughly by size of area, type and arrangement of buildings, and population. The five major urban terrain types--large cities, small cities and towns, villages, residential areas, and strip areas--are defined as follows:

(1) ***Large cities***. Large cities usually have multistory buildings with wide streets laid out in a fairly regular pattern. The populations are large, numbering into the hundreds of thousands, and vegetation is limited. Whenever possible, avoid using cities as operations areas. Indirect fire or air strikes can easily block streets with rubble. This prevents transportation units from moving through or out of the area. Units required to operate large cities should locate near the edge, close to the industrial section. Industrial sections have large factories, warehouse buildings, and parking lots that are well-suited to transportation units. Road networks in these areas are usually in good condition.

(2) ***Small cities and towns***. Small cities and towns are by far the most numerous of urban terrains available to support transportation units. They generally have good road networks. Most have an adequate number of paved vehicle parking areas and large buildings for concealment. However, some of the roads may be narrow and laid out in an irregular pattern, restricting movement.

(3) ***Villages***. More plentiful than towns or small cities, villages consist of a combination of closely positioned residential houses and small family farms. Few have areas or buildings large enough to be used by transport units.

(4) ***Residental areas***. As a rule, residential areas do not afford good positions for concealing large task vehicles and equipment. Residential buildings are usually arranged in a regular pattern with straight streets. Scattered trees and low vegetation also make it difficult to camouflage equipment.

(5) ***Strip areas***. Strip areas consist of commercial or residential buildings. They are often found along highway routes connecting two cities or between towns and cities. Strip areas lack depth. Most of the buildings are one or two stories high and too small to conceal vehicles inside. Such areas generally allow for early detection of enemy forces; assisting in designing and maintaining perimeter security. The road network and design allows for the easy movement of vehicles.

c. **Operational Considerations**. With a few modifications, the procedures for setting up an operations area in urban terrain are similar to those used in rural terrain. Transportation units are usually not alone in an urban environment. At a minimum, civilians will also remain in the area. The fact that civilians are in the area must be considered when planning and executing mission support. Close coordination with collocated units in the base or base cluster is essential to prevent breeches of security.

d. **Billeting**. The physical layout of urban terrain allows for billeting soldiers and concealing vehicles without using tents or camouflage screening systems. The decision to pool or disperse is METT-T dependent. Billets must give adequate protection. All billets should be either in the basement or higher than the second floor to protect troops from aerial or artillery attacks. Cover windows with chicken wire to prevent entry by grenades or other items. Tape the windows to protect against shattering glass.

e. **Vehicles**. The best method of camouflaging vehicles and pieces of equipment is to hide them inside buildings. If building contents must be moved outside to make way for unit vehicles and equipment, ensure that the contents fit the surroundings and do not draw undue attention. Whenever possible, do not move equipment found inside to the outside. Do not permit soldiers to run vehicle engines inside buildings without adequate ventilation.

f. **Observation Posts**. Buildings that offer good views of the likely avenues of approach are ideal OPs. A secondary responsibility is the monitoring of overhead airspace for hostile aircraft.

g. **Security**. Operating in urban terrain and in close proximity of local civilians increases the possibility of security compromise. The degree of security depends on the available security resources, type of urban terrain, and extent of terrain occupied. Security precautions must be taken against the use of sewers or interconnected cellars by infiltrators or saboteurs. Commanders should use MPs or HN police when possible to augment unit internal security.

h. **Command Post**. The company CP should be centrally located inside the perimeter. The building should be well-constructed and large enough to accommodate the quick reaction force/reserve force during periods of increased security. Take all measures to conceal the CP position. Vehicles should be kept away from the CP. Radio antennas should be removed and concealed.

i. **Defense**. The defense of the urban operations area perimeter should be organized for both ground and air threat. Locate and construct fighting positions IAW FM 90-10-1. The best defense of an urban operations area is concealment. Truck units should only fight defensively and not become decisively engaged with air or ground forces.

j. **Urban Power Source**. Use the electrical power from the area if operational. However, generators should be prepared and wire already run as a backup source.

k. **Mess Operations**. The dining facility should be positioned centrally, but not next to the CP. Consider using existing civilian mess facilities if available. Also consider putting the MKT inside a building and operating from that location.